

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

S E C R E T STATE 153922

EXDIS

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION AMMAN AND CAIRO AUG 4 FROM SECSTATE
RPTD TO YOU:

QTE

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EXDIS

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION JIDDA, INFO SANAA, TEHRAN, DHAHRAN,
AUG 3, FROM SECSTATE RPTD TO YOU:

QUOTE S E C R E T STATE 153922

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA, YE, US

SUBJ: SAUDI ARMS FOR YAR

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REF: (A) JIDDA 2204; (B) SANAA 961; (C) JIDDA 2573;

(D) JIDDA 2750; (E) JIDDA 3012; (F) JIDDA 3081;
(G) SANAA 1378; (H) AMMAN 4048

SUMMARY: IN FORTHCOMING MEETING WITH PRINCE SULTAN, SUGGEST AMBASSADOR 1) REMIND PRINCE SULTAN THAT US INPUT (EXPERTISE, ETC.) INTO YEMEN ARMS PACKAGE SEVERELY LIMITED BY ABSENCE OF MAP FUNDS; AND 2) INITIAL WASHINGTON REACTION IS THAT PROPOSED PACKAGE FAR TOO LARGE AND COMPLEX FOR YAR TO ABSORB AND NEEDS EXTENSIVE REFINEMENT. IF SULTAN INQUIRES RE POSSIBILITY SAG PURCHASE OF EGYPTIAN EQUIPMENT FOR YAR, AMBASSADOR SHOULD INDICATE SUCH TRANSACTIONS ARE MATTER FOR PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED TO DECIDE BUT WE BELIEVE SAUDIS WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO LOOK TO OTHER THIRD PARTIES AS SOURCE FOR ANY SOVIET MATERIEL THEY FEEL THEY MUST ACQUIRE. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH REGARD SAUDI SUGGESTION (REF A AND OTHERS) THAT US ASSUME COSTS OF ARMS AND EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENTS TO BE FURNISHED BY SAG TO YAR TO MEET ITS MOST URGENT REQUIREMENTS, WE BELIEVE YOU SHOULD USE MEETING WITH PRINCE SULTAN TO POINT OUT THAT MAP FUNDS FOR SAUDI ARABIA (WHICH HAVE BEEN QUESTIONED IN CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS GIVEN MAGNITUDE OF SAUDI RESOURCES) ARE LIMITED TO SUPPORT OF USMTM AND TRAINING FOR SAUDI MILITARY PERSONNEL ONLY. NO MAP FUNDS ARE AUTHORIZED FOR HARDWARE FOR YAR OR SAUDI ARABIA NOR IS THERE ANY LIKELIHOOD OF ANY CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION IN THE FUTURE. YOU SHOULD ALSO POINT OUT THAT FUTURE OF MAP GENERALLY IN FY 74 IS HIGHLY UNCERTAIN. CREDIT PROSPECTS ARE DIM. WE ARE MOREOVER DOUBTFUL THAT YAR CAN OR SHOULD BE ASKED ASSUME LARGE ADDITIONAL DEBT BURDENS AT THIS TIME. IT IS FOR THESE REASONS, AMONG OTHERS, THAT US HAS STRESSED TO SAUDIS NEED TO BEAR PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL BURDEN FOR YAR AND HAS ENCOURAGED YAR TO LOOK TO SAUDI ARABIA FOR MILITARY SUPPORT. YOU MAY ADD THAT US PREPARED MAKE CERTAIN FMS CASH SALES TO YAR IF SAG WISHED TO FINANCE.

2. POUCHED REPORT CONCERNING PROPOSAL TO MODERNIZE YAR ARMY RECEIVED AND UNDERGOING STATE/DOD REVIEW. IN FUTURE MESSAGE WE WILL COMMENT ON PLAN (AND ON NAVY AND SECRET

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AIR FORCE PLANS ON BASIS MESSAGES RECEIVED SO FAR) IN MORE DETAIL.

3. BESIDES POINTING OUT PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN ARRANGING MATERIAL US INPUT INTO PACKAGE, SUGGEST YOU PASS ON TO SULTAN OUR INITIAL IMPRESSIONS OF LONG RANGE PLAN FOR YAR DEVELOPED BY GENERAL QABBANI, WHICH ARE AS FOLLOWS: WE SUPPORT CONCEPT OF SAUDI MAAG, TRAINED BY US MTTT AS

PROPOSED REF D, BUT STRONGLY DOUBT THAT EVEN WITH US MTT INPUT IT WOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE NECESSARY TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE, ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTIC FOLLOW-THROUGH AND SUSTAINED COORDINATION WHICH WOULD BE ESSENTIAL IF PROGRAM OF THIS MAGNITUDE WERE TO BE EFFECTIVE. ACCORDINGLY, WE BELIEVE THAT SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN THE SIZE AND COMPLEXITY OF ANY LARGE ASSISTANCE PACKAGE IS ESSENTIAL AT LEAST DURING INITIAL PHASE. REDUCTION SHOULD BE TO A LEVEL WHICH YAR CAN REALISTICALLY ABSORB AND WHICH SAUDIS, WITH ASSISTANCE OF JORDANIANS AND IRANIANS AS APPROPRIATE, COULD HANDLE AND WHICH WOULD MEET YAR'S MINIMUM ESSENTIAL DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS. WE REMAIN WILLING PROVIDE, ON FMS CASH BASIS, SERVICES OF A FEW MTT'S TO HELP TRAIN SAUDI INSTRUCTORS TO TEACH YEMENIS OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE OF SMALL ARMS AND OTHER BASIC EQUIPMENT.

4. WHILE IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT USMTM WOULD PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO GEN. QABBANI IN PUTTING TOGETHER HIS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARMS AID TO YAR WE ARE DISTURBED THAT PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO PRINCE SULTAN ARE CONSIDERED BY SAG TO BE JOINT USMTM-QABBANI PROPOSALS. WE, OF COURSE, WISH TO AVOID LEAVING ANY IMPRESSION THAT PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN ENDORSED BY USG. JUDGING FROM PARAGRAPH 4 REF F, WE GATHER PRINCE SULTAN FULLY AWARE THAT CONCLUSIONS REACHED BY QUOTE USMTM-QABBANI CONSULTATION GROUP END QUOTE AND PRESENTED TO HIM IN REPORT FORM REPRESENT STAFF PROPOSALS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN APPROVED BY USG.

5. WE BELIEVE THAT EGYPTIAN ROLE IN ARMS ASSISTANCE TO YAR TENTATIVELY PUT FORWARD BY SULTAN (REF F) WOULD INVOLVE NUMBER OF UNCERTAINTIES AND POSSIBLE POLITICAL COMPLICATIONS. PROVISION OF MATERIEL IN THIS WAY AT LEAST MIGHT ENABLE YEMENIS TO MAKE USE OF SOME OF THE INOPERATIVE
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SOVIET EQUIPMENT THEY NOW POSSESS. IT WOULD ALSO, AS POINTED OUT BY AMBASSADOR THACHER, HELP YAR IN ARAB CONTEXT. HOWEVER, IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT INCENTIVE FOR YEMENIS TO KEEP SOVIET ADVISORS WOULD BE INCREASED. STILL ANOTHER POSSIBILITY MIGHT BE REPLACEMENT OF SOVIET ADVISORS BY EGYPTIANS, ALONG LINES EGYPTIAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN LIBYA. ALSO ANY U.S. SUPPORT FOR EGYPTIAN-SUPPLIED ARMS TO YAR COULD INSPIRE EGYPTIAN EXPECTATION THAT THE U.S. AND SAUDI ARABIA WOULD FACILITATE REPLACEMENT OF ANY SOVIET ORIGIN AIRCRAFT EGYPT MIGHT TRANSFER TO YAR WITH WESTERN MANUFACTURED AIRCRAFT. WE WOULD THEREFORE NEED EXERCISE CARE AVOID LEAVING SAUDIS WITH IMPRESSION THAT WE WOULD SUPPORT, EVEN TACITLY, EITHER ANY TRANSFER OF ARMS FROM SAUDI ARABIA TO EGYPT AS QUID PRO QUO FOR TRANSFER OF SOVIET ORIGIN MATERIEL FROM EGYPT TO YAR OR

REPLACEMENT OF EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT WITH WESTERN AIRCRAFT.
SHOULD SULTAN SHOW A CONTINUING AND STRONG INTEREST IN HIS
PROPOSAL THAT SAG PURCHASE APPROPRIATE AMMUNITION, SPARE
PARTS AND EQUIPMENT FROM EGYPTIANS TO PASS ON TO YEMENIS,
YOU SHOULD INDICATE THAT THIS IS MATTER FOR PARTIES
DIRECTLY CONCERNED TO DECIDE, BUT BELIEVE SAUDI PURCHASE
OF SOVIET MATERIEL FOR YAR FROM OTHER SOURCES (I.E.
INDONESIA OR PAKISTAN) ALSO WORTH SAG CONSIDERATION. ROGERS
UNQTE ROGERS

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